



News Release

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Corps Announces Open House for Viewing PCB-cleanup Equipment

(HONOLULU, NOV. 15) -- The Honolulu District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has scheduled an open house to view the indirect thermal desorption unit that will be used to treat the PCB-contaminated soil stockpiled in Tanapag Village.

The open house will be held Nov. 21 from 3 to 6 p.m. adjacent to Tanapag Cemetery No. 2 where the soil is stockpiled and the ITD unit is being assembled.

"We hope the public, the media, representatives from government agencies and, especially, the residents of Tanapag Village all come," said Corps representative Frank Ono. "Many of the Tanapag Villagers have asked us questions about the unit and when the soil cleanup will begin and this is a great opportunity for them to see how it will work and ask us questions."

Site preparation work began on Oct. 17 after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency conditionally approved the Corps' plan to use the ITD method to treat the 20,000 tons of stockpiled soil that is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyl. The Corps' contractor, Environmental Chemical Corporation of Aiea, Hawaii, has been receiving and assembling the unit's components for the past few weeks and the work is progressing according to schedule.

Ono said ECC plans to begin testing the unit after Thanksgiving, first starting with clean coral material. In December, Corps, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Division of Environmental Quality officials will conduct formal tests of the ITD unit.

After the unit passes all the required tests, the actual treatment of the soil will begin. The start of the cleanup is scheduled for January. Work at the site, including restoration, should be completed next summer.

Ono also thanked the people of CNMI for their cooperation and support and said the Corps would continue to keep the public informed as the cleanup progresses.